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General Assembly
Sixty-second session

Official Records

98th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 21 May 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kerim ..... (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Agenda item 132 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/62/657/Add.8)

The President: I would like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/62/657/Add.8, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications contained in documents A/62/657 and Add.1 to Add.7, Cape Verde has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of that information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(d) Election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

The President: Members will recall that, at the 80th plenary meeting of its sixtieth session, the General Assembly, under the terms of reference outlined in resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, elected 47 members of the Human Rights Council.

At the same meeting, in accordance with paragraph 14 of resolution 60/251 and by a drawing of lots, 15 Member States from among the 47 were chosen for a two-year term of office ending on 18 June 2008.

Furthermore, in accordance with a decision also adopted by the General Assembly at the same meeting, pertaining to the staggering of terms of membership, the 15 seats with a two-year term of office were distributed among the regional groups as follows: four seats for the Group of African States; four seats for the Group of Asian States; two seats for the Group of Eastern European States; three seats for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States; and two seats for the Group of Western European and other States.

The 15 Member States whose term will expire on 18 June 2008 are as follows: Brazil, France, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Japan, Mali, Pakistan, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zambia. Those Member States are eligible for immediate re-election.

The General Assembly will now proceed to the election of the 15 members of the Human Rights Council.

In accordance with resolution 60/251, membership in the Council shall be open to all States Members of the United Nations and the members of the Council shall serve for a period of three years and shall not be eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms. The members of the Council shall be elected directly and individually, by secret ballot, by the majority of the members of the General Assembly. Accordingly, for the present election, 97 votes

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constitute a majority in the General Assembly, which has a membership of 192 Member States.

The election will be held in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly on elections. For this election, rules 92 and 94 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly shall be applied.

Consistent with the practice of the General Assembly, if more than the required number of Member States has obtained the votes of the majority of the members of the Assembly on the same ballot, those Member States which have obtained the largest number of votes above the required majority will be considered as elected, up to the number of seats to be filled. Also, consistent with past practice, in the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to those procedures?

It was so decided.

The President: Accordingly, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

Again, I should like to repeat that the 15 vacant seats are to be filled from among the regional groups as follows: four seats from among the Group of African States; four seats from among the Group of Asian States; two seats from among the Group of Eastern European States; three seats from among the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States; and two seats from among the Group of Western European and other States. The ballot papers reflect that pattern.

As was stated in resolution 60/251, when electing members of the Council, Member States shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A", "B", "C", "D" and "E" will now be distributed. Ballot A for the African States Group has four blank lines for the four seats. Ballot B for the Asian States Group also has four blank lines for the four seats. Ballot C for the Eastern European States Group has two blank lines for the two seats. Ballot D for the Latin American and Caribbean States Group has three blank lines for the three seats. Ballot E for the Western European and other States Group has two blank lines for the two seats.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers and to write on them the names of the States for which they wish to vote. A ballot paper containing more names from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it will be declared invalid. A ballot will also be declared invalid if all the names of the Member States on that ballot do not belong to the relevant region. If a ballot paper of a region contains some of the names of the Member States that do not belong to that region, the ballot remains valid but the names of Member States that do not belong to that region will not be counted at all.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Bardijn (Belgium), Mrs. Ruffer Lustigová (Czech Republic), Mrs. Orina (Kenya), Mr. Azeez (Maldives), Ms. Sánchez Salazar (Mexico), Mr. Adamou (Niger), Mr. Obando (Peru) and Ms. Dinç (Turkey) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 10.45 a.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A – African States	
Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	192
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	191
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Zambia	182
Ghana	181
Burkina Faso	180
Gabon	178
Kenya	2
Mali	2
Gambia	1
Benin	1

Group B – Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	192
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	192
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Japan	155
Bahrain	142
Republic of Korea	139
Pakistan	114
Sri Lanka	101
Timor-Leste	92

Group C – Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	2
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	3
Number of members voting:	187
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Slovakia	135
Ukraine	125
Serbia	93
Czech Republic	9

Group D – Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	192
Abstentions:	5
Number of members voting:	187
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Chile	176
Brazil	175
Argentina	172
Venezuela	3
Ecuador	1

Group E – Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers:	192
Number of invalid ballots:	2
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	10
Number of members voting:	182
Required absolute majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
France	123
United Kingdom	120
Spain	119

[Subsequently, Member States were informed by letter of the President of the General Assembly dated 22 May 2008 that the results of the election contain two recording errors by the Secretariat. For Group E — Western European and other States — the registration for abstentions should have been 1 instead of 10, and the number of members voting should have been 189 (192 ballots minus 2 invalid ballots, minus 1 abstention) instead of 182. Notwithstanding the two errors, the actual counting by teller of the votes for each of the three candidates was based on 189 valid ballots of members who voted and the result of the votes for each of the three candidates remains unchanged, after having been tallied twice and verified by the tellers.]

The President: Having obtained the votes of the required majority and the largest number of votes of the members of the General Assembly, the following States are elected members of the Human Rights Council for a three-year term of office beginning on 19 June 2008: Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, France, Gabon, Ghana, Japan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zambia.

I congratulate those States that have been elected members of the Human Rights Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

This concludes our consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 113.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.